



UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
United States Patent and Trademark Office
Address: COMMISSIONER FOR PATENTS
P.O. Box 1450
Alexandria, Virginia 22313-1450
www.uspto.gov

APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/173,134	10/15/1998	GEORGE S. GABRIEL	364106/176	1325

7590 06/02/2004
STROOCK & STROOCK & LAVAN
180 MAIDEN LANE
NEW YORK, NY 10038

EXAMINER

NGUYEN, SON T

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
----------	--------------

3643

DATE MAILED: 06/02/2004

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

09/173,134

Applicant(s)

GABRIEL ET AL.

Examiner

Son T. Nguyen

Art Unit

3643

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 01 March 2004.
- 2a) ☒ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☐ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-3,8 and 9 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-3,8,9 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Son T. Nguyen
Prim Exm 3643

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
- ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 - ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 - ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- ☐ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- ☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____
- ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____
- ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- ☐ Other: _____

DETAILED ACTION

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

1. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

2. **Claims 1,2** are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Sheaffer et al. (US 4,989,545 on form PTO-1449) in view of applicants' admitted prior art (herein AAPA).

For claim 1, Sheaffer et al. disclose a multipurpose cage level barrier rodent cage for housing multiple species of rodents, including mice or rats in a ventilated rack and cage system (as mentioned in applicants' specification on page 1) comprising a cage bottom 22 having a plurality of integral side walls 50, a floor 22 and an open top end closed off by a filter bonnet 24. In addition, Sheaffer et al.'s rack for supporting the cages comprises a ventilating system for directly providing air ventilation to and continuously removing exhaust air from the cages supported by the rack (col. 4, lines 25-39 and col. 5, lines 12-56). Sheaffer et al. are silent about the floor having a length l and a width w wherein $80 \text{ in}^2 \leq l \times w \leq 110 \text{ in}^2$. AAPA submits on page 1 of the specification that one of ordinary skill in the art would recognize the floor area of a cage for laboratory animals to be a parameter that may be varied depending on, among other things, the type and number of animals intended to be housed in order to provide the animals with a hygienic and humane environment. Therefore, it would have been

obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to have the floor of the cage of Sheaffer with the dimension range as listed above, since it has been held that where routine testing and general experimental conditions are present, discovering the optimum or workable ranges involves only routine skill in the art. In re Aller, 105 USPQ 233.

For claim 2, again, on page 1 of the specification, AAPA submits that "ILAR guidelines set non-binding minimums for size and dimension of cages for rodents. For mice weighing more than 25 grams, a cage having a floor dimension of at least 15 square inches per mouse is required. Rats up to 400 grams in size require a cage having floor dimensions of at least 40 square inches per rat. Similar requirements are mandated for hamsters and guinea pigs by the AWA". Base on this evidence, it would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to determine a set of dimensions for the floor area of Sheaffer's cage that would result in a floor area of 80 square inches in order to provide a cage having a floor area sufficient to accommodate two rats weighing up to 400 grams each to meet ILAR guidelines and the AWA as discussed by AAPA.

3. **Claims 3,8,9** are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Sheaffer et al. (US 4,989,545 on form PTO-1449) in view of Coiro et al. (US 5,894,816 on form PTO-1449).

For claim 3, in addition to the above, fig. 4 and col. 8, lines 57-64 of Sheaffer et al. disclose a double sided rack having a depth. However, Sheaffer are silent about the length of the cage being less than substantially 18 inches. Coiro et al. disclose a cage

level barrier cage comprising a cage bottom having an inner length 17 at the receptacle rim of about 11.4 inches (col. 5, lines 57-59) and an outer length L6 at rim of the receptacle of 11.75 inches (col. 4, lines 57-58). Based on this, the length of Coiro et al.'s cage is consider to be less than substantially 18 inches. It follows that the length / of Coiro et al.'s cage is also "less than substantially 36 inches" as claimed by applicant in claim 6. It would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to utilize a cage level barrier cage as taught by Coiro et al. in Sheaffer's double sided ventilated rack in order to provide a ventilated cage and rack system comprising cages having a usable floor space of 75 square inches, as taught by Coiro in col. 5, lines 60-63, to thereby accommodate up to five mice weighing 25 grams each, while retaining compatibility with existing wire bar lids and microbarrier tops as taught by Coiro in col. 3, lines 17-19.

For claim 8, please see the above paragraphs.

For claim 9, Sheaffer et al. as modified by Coiro et al. disclose the above features except a portion of the cage, when resting within the rack, extends beyond the rack. It would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to have a portion of the cage of Sheaffer et al. as modified by Coiro et al., when resting within the rack, extends beyond the rack depending on a chosen length one wishes to have (as long as it meets ILAR guidelines) because one of ordinary skill in the art would recognize the floor area of a cage for laboratory animals to be a parameter that may be varied depending on, among other things, the type and

number of animals intended to be housed in order to provide the animals with a hygienic and humane environment.

Response to Arguments

4. Applicant's arguments filed 3/1/04 have been fully considered but they are not persuasive.

Applicants argued that the Office Action of November 4, 2003, did not address Applicants' comments regarding discovering source/cause of a problem.

The Examiner has acknowledge Applicants' comment regarding discovering source of a problem and the evidence, i.e. declarations of Nick Guise (Exhibit 1), Neil Cnmpbell (Exhibit 2), Betty Fatzie (Exhibit 3) and Dietrich Crase (Exhibit 4) on the ground of discovering source of a problem. However, the Examiner still feels that it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art to change dimension sizes of the floor of a cage, depending on the type of animals being contained therein and the available space for storing the cage.

Note, all other arguments have already been addressed in previous actions, therefore, please refer to those actions.

Conclusion

5. **THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL.** Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).

A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire THREE MONTHS from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within TWO MONTHS of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not

Art Unit: 3643

mailed until after the end of the THREE-MONTH shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of the advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than SIX MONTHS from the mailing date of this final action.

6. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Son T. Nguyen whose telephone number is (703) 305-0765. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday - Friday from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Peter Poon, can be reached at (703) 308-2574. Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application or proceeding should be directed to Customer Service at (703) 872-9325. The official fax number is 703-872-9306.



Son T. Nguyen
Primary Examiner, GAU 3643
May 27, 2004